



How the Education System Works¹⁰

Besides your child's teacher, many other people are involved in your child's education. The more you know about what they do, the more you can help your child succeed.

TEACHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the first people you should go to with a concern about your child. • Talk to teachers about your child; the more they know the more they can help.
PRINCIPALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are responsible for supervising the whole school and helping teachers and staff do a better job. • Talk to the principal about issues that the teacher can't resolve.
PARA-PROFESSIONALS & SCHOOL-RELATED PERSONNEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide various types of assistance and support within and outside of the classrooms. • Other helpful school staff are secretaries, custodians, food service workers, bus drivers and security guards.
SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversees all schools in a district and is run by a superintendent. • Implements decisions made by the school board. • Contact this office if you have issues that the school can't resolve.
SCHOOL BOARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decides how the local school district will operate and is run by elected or appointed school board members. • Makes decisions about facilities, money for schools, staff, programs, etc. • Contact the Board office if you have issues that the school, staff or school district office can't resolve.

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervises all school districts and is run by a state superintendent. • Implements state-level decisions such as standards, funding, policies, etc. • Contact the State Department of Education if you have issues that can't be resolved locally.
TEACHER'S UNION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents members regarding salary, benefits, and working conditions such as class size, professional development, and school safety. • Provides information and programs to improve schools and advocates for high quality teachers, high standards, quality curriculum, etc.
PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION/ ORGANIZATION (PTA/PTO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalition of parents, teachers, and occasionally students that work together to improve the school and benefit students

Whenever you have questions about your child's education, even if you're not sure who to ask, speak with someone at his or her school. They can often direct you to the right person or department, or provide you with the information you're looking for. As you learn more about how schools work, you will be better able to navigate the system and help your child in his or her education.

Additional Information & Resources

1. For more information about your school district and school board visit your school's website and/or contact your child's school.
2. For more information about PTAs visit Michigan's Parent Teacher Association: <http://www.michiganpta.org/>